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Senate Hearings Resume on Packaging and Labeling

Public hearings on packaging and labeling practices were resumed this week by the Senate Antitrust and Monopoly Subcommittee, with Senator Hart (Mich.) presiding.

The subcommittee hearings were opened in late June (see INFORMATION LETTER of July 1, page 201) with an investigation of general problems in the field. In its hearings this week the subcommittee scheduled witnesses representing the area between the consumer on the one hand and the processor or manufacturer on the other.

Senator Hart has announced that further hearings will be held in mid-December.

In opening the three days of public hearings on October 25, Senator Hart stated, in part:

"Certain conclusions can be drawn from the June hearings. Particularly, many packaging and labeling practices make rational shopping by the consumer an unduly difficult, if not impossible, task. Many of these practices are widespread and have gained general trade acceptance. They have developed with a disregard of the consumer's interest in getting her money's worth. Furthermore, as a result of these practices, the consumer often is not able to perform her vital role in our free competitive society. She is not able to reward with her dollars the most efficient producer—the one who offers the better product at a lower price.

"A two-pronged problem results from these packaging practices. First, there is confusion in the marketplace. Second, there is a lack of incentive and reward for the processor or manufacturer who desires to operate in an ethical manner by making necessary information readily and easily understandable to the consumer.

"At this and later hearings we intend to explore the whys and wherefores of this situation. We also intend to determine how best to redress the balance in our economic system by assisting at the same time the ethic-

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Safety of Canned Foods from Fallout Ensured by Industry Practices

N.C.A. members and canning association offices are receiving inquiries from the press as to what the canning industry is doing to protect consumers from fallout dangers. The continuing nuclear detonations of record power being launched by Russia are bringing this matter to the forefront of public concern.

The canning industry and canners individually can give reassurance that canned foods are safe because of the careful preparation practices and continuous protective measures taken to ensure the wholesomeness and purity of these products. That the industry operates in this way was made evident most recently in its Protective Screen program when dangers from the residues of chemical pesticides were cited.

Another immediate factor of assurance lies in the fact that the current packs were virtually completed at the time the Russian series of tests in the atmosphere began.

The canning industry has cooperated with FDA for several years in the monitoring of the radiation level of canned foods, as part of that agency's broad surveys of all types of foods. This program tests thousands of samples on a year-round basis from all parts of the country.

The canning operation gives additional protection since the foods are thoroughly washed and rinsed before canning. The N.C.A., in cooperation with the Atomic Energy Commission, has for several years been engaged in research to determine the best methods for removal of minute traces of contaminants. These studies have already led the way to development and adoption of improved washing techniques.

Even further safety arises from the fact that the great majority of raw products for canning are peeled, hulled, shelled, skinned, or otherwise treated to remove the outer surfaces and with this any adhering residues.

As to later danger from the future fallout expected as a result of the Russian tests, the FDA has assured the American public that their monitoring will continue on a basis sufficient to reveal any danger levels that might arise. If this situation should arise the canning industry would, as in the past, have its products, both raw and processed, analyzed to ensure that only safe foods enter the market.

This is a traditional, orderly and normal procedure of this industry, whose operations have always been scientifically based, and whose concern for the wholesomeness and purity of its products is paramount.

Radioactive Fallout and Safety

Increased radioactive fallout due to the Russian resumption of nuclear bomb testing in the atmosphere recently led the American Medical Association to ask seven noted authorities on radiation how significant this might be from a health standpoint. A compilation of their views was issued as a recent press release by AMA, under the heading, "Possible Effect of Fallout on Health Rated Insignificant."

The survey emphasized the following three points: (1) Fallout constitutes a very small amount of radiation compared with the amount of naturally occurring radiation; (2) There is no proof that distant fallout ever caused a disease in a human being; (3) Although most scientists assume that any amount of radiation has a genetic effect, the genetic effect of fallout is unknown in human beings.

The consensus was that any additional radiation is undesirable, but

the increase due to distant fallout is so small that it does not represent a significant health hazard.

Marshall Bruer, M.D., chairman of the medical division, Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, Oak Ridge, Tenn., stated that the fallout now occurring represents a very small percentage increase over natural background radiation. Any effect of this increase, he said, would be so small that it would be exceedingly difficult even to measure and it would have no significance with regard to health. As to possible cumulative effect from fallout over a long period of time, Dr. Bruer said, "it might have an effect over a period of 1,200 years provided a person could live that long."

Dr. Francis J. Weber, M.D., chief of the division of radiological health, U.S. Public Health Service, said his office has intensified its program of measuring radioactive contamination. Although final analyses have not been completed, Dr. Weber said, as the interpretation of current levels of radioactivity in the air proceeds, "we do not believe that on completion of the specific analyses that the substances found will be present in a sufficiently high degree to pose a significant threat to health."

Dr. Lauriston Taylor, chief of the radiation physics division, National Bureau of Standards, said the average dose of radiation received by the reproductive cells of human beings from fallout was roughly the same as that from television sets, three percent of the natural background radiation.

Concurrent with the AMA press statement was the September 28 release by the Federal Radiation Council of its new "radiation protection guides." The new guides, printed in the *Federal Register* of September 26, 1961, and approved by President Kennedy, list tolerance levels for not only Strontium-90, but also for Iodine-131, Radium-226, and Strontium-89. The Council observed that concentrations of radioactive strontium in food and water do not result in concentrations in the skeleton (and consequently in radiation doses) as large as have been assumed in the past.

The work of the Council aims at setting standards for fallout levels, so that graded systems of protective action, when necessary, may be followed by the U.S. Public Health Service and other governmental agencies. Under the title of "Radiation Protection Guidance for Federal Agencies" the Council recommends procedures to be followed in the event that any of three ranges of average daily intake

of the significant radioactive materials exist.

The ranges and graded actions recommended in the FRC Report are as follows:

Ranges of Daily Intake (Micromicrocuries Per Day Averaged for 1 Year) for Use in Graded Scales of Action

Radioisotope	Range I	Range II	Range III
Iodine-131	0-10	10-100	100-1,000
Strontium-90	0-20	20-200	200-2,000
Strontium-89	0-200	200-2,000	2,000-20,000

It should be noted that these range levels represent the average daily intake. Therefore, to determine the yearly dose level these figures should be multiplied by 365. Also of importance is the fact that these represent cumulative values. In other words, it would make little difference whether a person received the dose in one day or spread over 365 days. This means a person may be exposed to high levels of radiation for short periods of time without ill effects provided the total for the year does not exceed the total safe level.

Range I calls for no more than checking to ensure confirmation of estimates that most of the population will be unharmed. Range II calls for active surveillance and routine control. Range III can mean that steps are taken to remove contaminated goods from the marketplace. Even Range III levels must persist (at an annual rate) before extreme counteractive measures are taken, which might include condemnation of certain food and water supplies.

In addition to studies of Iodine-131 in milk, stepped up programs have been initiated by the FDA, the USPHS, and State Health Departments for measuring Strontium-89, Strontium-90, and Cesium-137 in air, water, and various foods. Listings of radiation levels and other radiological measurements in various environmental media will be published monthly in Radiological Health Data by the USPHS, which branch of the federal government has the responsibility for collecting, analyzing and interpreting radiation levels. The N.C.A. will keep its members informed of any developments in this whole picture.

USDA Plentiful Foods List

The USDA Plentiful Foods List for December includes cranberries, for the third consecutive month, and turkeys, chickens, pork, apples, grapefruit, pecans, almonds, honey, vegetable fats and oils, peanut and peanut products, and, in some areas, dry beans.

Forthcoming Meetings

- Nov. 2—Illinois Canners Association, Fall Meeting, LaSalle Hotel, Chicago
- Nov. 3-4—Florida Vegetable Canners Association, 34 Annual Convention, Deauville Hotel, Miami Beach
- Nov. 13-14—Wisconsin Canners Association, 57th Annual Convention, Schroeder Hotel, Milwaukee
- Nov. 18-19—Georgia Canners Association, Annual Convention, King & Prince Hotel, St. Simons Island
- Nov. 18-19—Grocery Manufacturers of America, Inc., 53rd Annual Meeting, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, N.Y.
- Nov. 18-19—Indiana Canners Association, Annual Convention, French Lick
- Nov. 20-21—Michigan Canners and Freezers Association, Fall Meeting, Pauline Hotel, Grand Rapids
- Nov. 20-21—Pennsylvania Canners Association, 47th Annual Convention, Yorktowne Hotel, York
- Nov. 27-28—Ohio Canners and Food Processors Association, 54th Annual Convention, Commodore Perry Hotel, Toledo
- Nov. 29—Utah Canners Association, Annual Meeting, Weber Club, Ogden
- Dec. 4-5—Tri-State Packers Association, Annual Convention, Benjamin Franklin Hotel, Philadelphia
- Dec. 4-7—New York State Canners and Freezers Association, 76th Annual Convention, The Concord, Klamath Lake
- Dec. 9-12—National Food Brokers Association, National Food Sales Conference, Chicago
- Dec. 10-12—Ontario Food Processors Association, Annual Convention, Royal York Hotel, Toronto
- Jan. 7-11—Super Market Institute, Mid-Year Conference, Americana Hotel, Bal Harbour, Fla.
- Jan. 8-9—Northwest Canners and Freezers Association, Annual Convention, Olympic Hotel, Seattle
- Jan. 10-12—Illinois Canners Association, Canners School, Urbana
- Jan. 11-12—Canners League of California, 89th Annual Fruit and Vegetable Sample Cuttings, Fairmount Hotel, San Francisco
- Jan. 19-20—National Preservers Association, Annual Meeting, Galt Ocean Mile Hotel, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
- Jan. 19-20—National Pickle Packers Association, Meeting, Kenilworth Hotel, Bal Harbor, Fla.
- Jan. 21-24—NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION and Canning Machinery and Supplies Association, 55th Annual Conventions, Americana Hotel, Bal Harbour, Fla.

Kenneth N. Rider

Kenneth N. Rider, president of Kenneth N. Rider Company, Trafalgar, Ind., died there October 13.

Mr. Rider was one of the best known men in the canning industry in the Midwest. While still engaged in canning he had served for a number of years as the secretary of the Indiana Canners Association.

He served a term on the N.C.A. Board of Directors, 1944-47, and also was a member of the N.C.A. Raw Products Committee.

Packaging and Labeling

(Concluded from page 271)

ally-minded manufacturer and the harassed housewife."

Senator Hart declared that he has been encouraged, since the initial hearings, "by increasing industry awareness of the problems portrayed." He cited three industry groups—the Produce Packaging Association, the National Canners Association, and the Packaging Institute—for taking initiative along the lines indicated by the packaging and labeling hearings.

"This is cooperation between business and government that is wholesome and productive," he said.

"In addition, the Food and Drug Administration is pushing a stepped-up enforcement program where it can. That program is already having a significant effect on industry practices.

"How these activities will affect the final outcome of these hearings is yet to be determined. But certainly there is movement in a situation that was formerly static and this indeed is a good omen," Senator Hart declared.

Witnesses on October 25 were Roy King, editor of *Food Field Reporter*; representatives of the Greenbelt (Md.) consumer cooperative; and J. Arnold Anderson, vice president of Safeway Stores, Inc.

Mr. King asserted that "the great majority of the alleged deceptions are either the result of consumer ignorance of the industry or technical difficulties." Also, he said that "it is apparent that, for the sake of consumer reassurance, the food industry, together with its colleagues in packaging, must initiate an all-out public relations campaign to educate the public as to the mysteries of packaging and labeling."

Mr. Anderson cautioned against the establishment of packaging and labeling standards that create rigidity and may have the effect of limiting competitive choices in the market place with resulting detriment to consumers.

Mr. Anderson stated that "our customers are astute and recognize fair values. We doubt they can be hoodwinked often, or for long, by questionable or so-called deceptive food packaging and labeling, any more than they are deceived by sharp practices they encounter in other aspects of their daily lives."

Also, he said, "A satisfied customer is one who finds her purchase to be what she expected. A good label tells her what to expect in terms which are clear, simple, and understandable."

Barlow's Classic Thesis on Canning Reprinted

One of the historical landmarks in the bacteriology of canning was the thesis prepared by Bronson Barlow in 1913, when he was a candidate for the master of science degree at the University of Illinois. Barlow's pioneer research firmly established the role of thermophilic bacteria in producing spoilage of canned foods, a fact previously only suspected.

While Barlow's results are often cited by writers, the text was never published in full and so has not been generally available. With the permission of the University of Illinois, the N.C.A. has now reproduced the Barlow thesis. A moderate number of copies are available, and members wishing to have this in their reference libraries may obtain it by writing to the N.C.A. Washington Research Laboratory.

What's New in Home Economics

Appearing in the October issue of *What's New in Home Economics* magazine is an article, "Canned Beans Aid Meal Management," featuring the use of canned vegetables.

Frederica L. Beinert, food editor, says, "Canned vegetables are invaluable savers of steps, motion, and time for meal preparation in foods laboratory or home kitchen. When minutes are scarce canned beans, for example, need only a minimum of preparation coupled with a touch of imagination to fit into many interesting meals."

A section of the article called "Cookery Tips" gives eight suggestions for varied combinations of canned vegetables, herbs and seasonings. Two vegetable recipes are printed on the black and white full page photograph that illustrates this article.

N.C.A. Home Economists Address Food Buying Classes

Two home economics food buying classes were addressed last week by N.C.A. Consumer Service Division home economists.

Katherine R. Smith, Director, Consumer Service Division, spoke to a home economics class enrolled in the "Meal Management and Food Economics" course at the University of Maryland, College Park, Md.

The "Family Finance" class from George Washington University, Washington, D. C., held its October 19 class at the N.C.A. headquarters. The class toured the Research Laboratories and were addressed by Miss Smith and Gloria Hansen, Manager, N.C.A. Test Kitchens.

In both classes the importance of reading labels was stressed. Specific buying aids included on descriptive labels were pointed out showing that the information provided on canned food labels permit individual and intelligent selection of canned foods to fit all needs. News in research, a discussion of the nutrition contribution of canned foods to the diet, and canned foods for civil defense shelters were also included upon the request of the instructors.

In speaking to the "Family Finance" class Miss Hansen told of the convenience, ease of preparation, and high satiety value of canned foods. She also suggested buying canned foods to fit the use intended and reviewed examples of label information found helpful in making selections.

Canned foods are used 17 times. These foods are green beans, white onions, wax beans, kidney beans, pork and beans, beans in tomato sauce, lima beans, condensed soup, stewed tomatoes, and pineapple chunks. Some foods are used more than once.

Stocks of Canned Foods on Oct. 1 and Season Shipments

(N.C.A. Division of Statistics)

	Carry-over month	Supply		Canners' Stocks, Oct. 1		Season Shipments to Oct. 1	
		1960-61	1961-62	1960	1961	1960	1961
		(Thousands of actual cases)					
Peas.....	June	33,248	32,791	23,443	22,732	9,805	10,050
Asparagus.....	March	8,968	9,582	4,356	4,824	4,612	4,758
Spinach.....	March	6,630	7,189	3,226	3,002	3,405	3,587
Pineapple*.....	June	18,626	20,083	12,085	14,980	6,541	6,003
Pineapple juice*.....	June	13,843	13,978	9,274	10,326	4,509	3,652

* Source: Pineapple Growers Association of Hawaii.

N.C.A. Officers at Meetings

N.C.A. President John C. Hemingway and Executive Vice President Milan D. Smith attended the 30th annual convention of the Florida Canners Association this week. They discussed industry problems and Association matters with the Florida canners.

Mr. Smith also was present at the annual meeting of the National Association of Food Chains last week in Chicago.

USDA Advisory Committees To Review Research Needs

The National Agricultural Research Advisory Committee of the USDA and 24 commodity and functional research and marketing advisory committees, will meet early in November in Washington to help USDA officials in a review of the nation's agricultural research program.

This review, which has been under way in USDA since early last summer, was undertaken at the request of the House Committee on Appropriations (see INFORMATION LETTER of June 10, page 187).

These advisory committees will help USDA appraise (1) the importance of present research in the light of research needs that have not yet been met, and (2) how more of these needs can be met cooperatively by USDA and other federal, state, and private agencies doing research in agriculture. A final report will be submitted to the House Appropriations Committee in January, 1962, in connection with the presentation of the USDA budget for fiscal year 1963.

The National Advisory Committee will meet November 9 and 10, following meetings of the commodity and functional committees. The chairmen of the commodity and functional committees also will attend the National Committee meeting, and will present summaries of their recommendations.

Commodity committees are Forestry, Rice, Sheep and Wool, Forage, Feed, and Seed, Citrus and Subtropical Fruit, Potato, Sugar, Grain, Deciduous Fruit and Tree Nuts, Poultry, Oilseeds and Peanut, Tobacco, Vegetable, Cotton and Cottonseed, Livestock, and Dairy.

The functional committees are Food and Nutrition, Home Economics, Soils, Water and Fertilizer, Farm Equip-

ment and Structures, Food Distribution, Refrigerated and Frozen Products, Transportation, and Economics.

All the committees are appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, acting under provisions of the Research and Marketing Act of 1946. The National Committee meets quarterly, and the commodity and functional committees meet annually or on call for special meetings. The committees offer appraisal and guidance to USDA in developing its research programs dealing with food and agriculture.

Canned Foods for School Lunch

USDA announced October 25 an offer to buy canned sliced beets, canned pumpkin or squash (summer type squash excluded), canned sauerkraut, and canned spinach packed during 1961.

Offers will be considered only on No. 10 size cans. Purchases will be made on an offer and acceptance basis, using funds appropriated under the National School Lunch Act.

Offers must be received by the Fruit and Vegetable Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, Washington 25, D.C., by 4 p.m. EST November 3 for acceptance by November 14. Delivery will be required during the period December 4 through December 30.

Further details may be obtained from Claude S. Morris, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA (telephone Washington, D.C., 202 DUDLEY 8-2781).

USDA Surveys PACA Licensees on Method of Setting Fees

USDA has mailed a survey form to all licensees under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act, asking for information that will be used in a study requested by Congress concerning the administration of that Act.

In line with recommendations of a committee from the fruit and vegetable industry, proposed amendments to the PACA were submitted to Congress at its last session. One of the proposed amendments concerned PACA license fees. USDA suggested an increase in fee from the current \$25 to \$35 to cover current administrative costs, with authority to raise the fee up to a maximum of \$50 if necessary at a later date.

As an outgrowth of Congressional hearings on that legislation, USDA has been directed to investigate the feasibility of variable or supplemental fees depending on the volume of business conducted or the number of retail branches or stores operating.

USDA states that it does not oppose the principle of variable fees if the industry favors such a plan. However, USDA states that such a plan would be costly to administer and would require the submission of reports at least annually on the volume of business conducted.

USDA has requested prompt cooperation of all licensees in completing the study. The survey form should be returned to the Fruit and Vegetable Division of the Agricultural Marketing Service by November 10.

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